



# MOCK CITY COUNCIL LESSON TO BE OR NOT TO BE: THE TREE

Dear Educator,

Your students soon will be participating in a unique decision-making process: a Mock City Council Meeting. The information outlined below is to assist you in the classroom planning process for this experience.

- Two to three weeks in advance, your CityStuff volunteer will hand you a folder of Student Scripts for the final CityStuff Lesson: *To Be Or Not To Be: The Tree*. Included for you in the folder is a copy of the Volunteer/Teacher script along with additional materials for the Mock Council Meeting.
- Nearly all classroom teachers assign the roles to the students. Everyone in the class will play a role.
- Many classroom teachers prefer the students are familiar with their assigned roles before the Mock Council Meeting lesson. On the other hand, you may assign the roles at the time of this lesson.  
***Whether practiced or impromptu, held in Council Chambers or in the classroom, the Mock Council Meeting is NOT a performance. It is a learning exercise.***

Thank you for the opportunity to present CityStuff lessons to your terrific third-graders. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (760) 436-0140 or [citystuff1@gmail.com](mailto:citystuff1@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Kathy Siemion  
CityStuff Program Coordinator



# LESSON SIX: TO BE OR NOT TO BE: THE TREE

## A MOCK CITY COUNCIL MEETING

### OVERVIEW

The students will learn about the public process and understand that citizens can and should participate in the process.

### OBJECTIVE

The students will learn that:

- Many things go into each of the hundreds of decisions the City Council makes each year.
- The Council relies on staff input and experts on a subject.
- The Council takes advice from appropriate volunteer advisory groups.
- Decorum and protocol must be followed.
- The Council courteously listens to and carefully considers public opinion – particularly the needs and wants of people who may be affected by the decision.
- Sometimes Council members check things out in person, so they can be sure they are making the right decision.
- People can legitimately disagree in a cordial manner. Just because someone's opinion is different doesn't make it wrong.
- Whatever decision is reached – and whether that decision is unanimous or not – each Council member votes based upon what he/she sincerely believes is the right thing to do for Carlsbad.

### CONCEPTS

Democracy • Rules of Meetings • Agreeing and Disagreeing

### SKILLS

Decision-making • Following a script • Public speaking

### MATERIALS

Script for each student/cast member plus 1 each for volunteer and teacher  
Agenda Bill  
2 "Request to Speak" forms – one for each family  
Photos and names of City Council members and City Manager  
Photo of "The Tree"  
5 copies: Lopez Family sign: **SAVE THE TREE**  
5 copies: Johnson Family sign: **CUT DOWN THE TREE**

**CAST: Everyone in class will play a role.** The cast is predicated on a 20-student class. For larger classes, we have written in parts for additional Lopez and Johnson family members to use at your discretion.

5 City Council Members: Mayor; Council Members #1, #2, #3, #4  
City Attorney  
City Clerk  
City Manager  
Parks Department Supervisor Staff  
Parks Department Certified Arborist  
Parks and Recreation Commission Chairperson  
4 or more Lopez Family Members – who want the tree to stay  
5 or more Johnson Family Members – who want the tree removed

The City Council Members, City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk sit in assigned spots on the dais. In a classroom setting, arrange eight desks in the front of the classroom facing outward toward the audience. The Parks Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Commission Chairperson and Staff Arborist sit at a table or set of three desks facing the Council. The Lopez and Johnson families sit in the audience until it is their turn to speak. Then, they approach the podium, speak and return to their seats. A desk in the classroom can be used as the podium.